

# ORLANDO BUSINESS JOURNAL

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## Senate OKs SunRail

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The Florida Senate passed a bill on Dec. 8 in a 27-10 vote that gave the OK for SunRail and high-speed rail just 24 hours after the House gave it a thumbs-up in an 84-26 vote.

The bill, which failed to pass two times previously, approves projects including Orlando's SunRail commuter rail project, as well as the high-speed rail project connecting Orlando, Miami, Tampa and Jacksonville.

In addition, it will bring the state one signature away from securing more than \$2 billion for high-speed rail, and also approved the creation of a funding mechanism that would assist the troubled Tri-Rail system in South Florida.

The bill would create a Florida Rail Enterprise within the state Department of Transportation — much like the organization overseeing the operation of Florida's Turnpike — that would manage passenger rail systems. The bill proposes a passenger rail commission that would advise the **Florida Department of Transportation** on designing, building, operating, financing and maintaining the rail systems.

A specific date for the bill to reach the desk of Florida Gov. Charlie Crist has not been scheduled.